

THE BELGO-CONGOLESE



ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

VISIT...

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«...Young trees need stakes to support them, but the stakes must be removed once the trees begin to grow, precisely so as not to hinder their growth...»

Leopold II, King of the Belgians,
in a letter to his Minister, Charles Woeste,
dated June 9, 1901.

The historic days of February 1960



FEBRUARY 20

**Closing Session of the Belgo-Congolese
Round Table Conference**



FEBRUARY 21

**Speech by His Majesty King Baudouin
to the
Belgian and Congolese Delegations
at the Round Table**













Discourses and Speeches

Mr. Albert LILAR

**Deputy Prime Minister,
President of the Round Table Conference.**

Gentlemen.

It is with considerable emotion that I declare this final session of our Round Table Conference open. For the space of one month, in a serene atmosphere which is the more admirable when we consider the exceptionally serious matters under discussion, we have driven together to lay the strong foundation of an independent Congo.

This historic task has been accomplished with a sense of responsibility, general good faith, courtesy and diligence of which we may all be proud. Having had the honour of presiding over your debates, permit me to express my thanks to the entire assembly for the exemplary discipline which it collectively imposed and displayed. I am especially grateful to the two Vice-Presidents and the members of the office who have extended their unfailing and invaluable help to me; to the Presidents and Members of the Committees who have laboured competently and conscientiously to solve the delicate problems laid before them; and to all the delegates who contributed all that lay in them to the common task.

My thanks are also due to those who so devotedly undertook the secretarial work of the Conference, who drew up and distributed the documents essential to our task.

To the delegates of the Congo, I would say : Gentlemen, the independence of your vast and beautiful land is now an established fact. On June 30 next, independence will be formally proclaimed, and Belgium unreservedly associates herself with the joy of all the peoples of the Congo at being able to take charge of their own destiny.

The task accomplished by the Round Table has not only enabled us to determine the ultimate structure of the new State, but has also permitted all of us —



members of the Belgian Government, Representatives of both Houses, and the Congolese Delegates — to get to know and appreciate each other. I believe these human relationships to be of capital importance, for nothing valid or lasting can be achieved unless all men of good will sincerely try to build a better future.

And it is precisely the future that has engaged our attention; without allowing ourselves to be encumbered by the past, we have retained those factors of the great work accomplished by Belgium on the Continent of Africa which are a solemn pledge of her efforts in years to come.

All of us here, Belgians and Congolese alike, nourish the hope — nay, more : the will — to co-operate in promoting the greatness and the prosperity of the Independent Congo. It is our duty to have our respective peoples participate in this great task, and to share with them the confidence that fills us all today.

The independence of a State implies that great responsibilities must be borne by its leaders. They must exercise their authority in such a way as to guarantee to each member of the community the full flowering of his individuality, the respect of his aims and ideals, his traditions and rights. Law and order must be maintained without recourse to arbitrary measures; the country must be administered for the benefit of its citizens; favourable working conditions must be created and

maintained; and social progress promoted — all this in due proportion to the possibilities offered by the prevailing economic situation.

Gentlemen of the Congolese Delegations, you have proved that you are aware of these difficulties and the responsibilities that will fall on your shoulders. By deciding on the organisation of an Economic Conference, you show your desire to lay the foundations of your country's economic stability, to safeguard its credit and to promote essential capital investment. Belgium is at your side to help you in every sphere of activity wherein her co-operation is requested.

Personally, I am convinced that the accession to independence — which in any country is invariably fraught with difficulties — will be peacefully and lawfully achieved in the Congo. Guarantees concerning the security of persons and property are the evidence of your will to show the world, whose eyes are fixed on you, that you intend to set up a stable, prosperous State in the heart of the African Continent, wherein the

rights of all inhabitants — be they Black or White — will be respected.

From all corners of the Congo, you came to the Round Table, political leaders and tribal representatives alike. You have debated amongst yourselves; in committee and in plenary session you have courageously and frankly expressed your opinions. Now you are about to return to your country, knowing each other better, knowing too that it is possible to work together in building a great future for the Congo State. May you be able to create and preserve in your national assemblies the same spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding which inspired your work at the Round Table. May you also use, for the benefit of your peoples, the experience acquired during your stay in Belgium.

The year 1960 marks the birth of the Independent Congo. It is a year during which, thanks to the friendship of two peoples, a great hope is finally fulfilled.

Long live the Congo; long live Belgium.

Mr. Gaston EYSKENS

Prime Minister.

Gentlemen,

A few weeks ago, when I took the chair at the opening session of this Round Table Conference, I told you that in the interests of both Belgium and the Congo, it should be brought to a successful conclusion.

I believe I may say in all sincerity that this success has been achieved. I am convinced that the fundamental unity of the Congo has been preserved. The foundations of the basic national infrastructure of your country have been realistically and strongly defined. We have all of us become fully aware of the prime importance of economic problems. We have all of us realised how essential close co-operation between Belgium and the Congo will be in the coming years.

This Conference has been successful in another no less important sphere, for I think it has consolidated the basis of true, sincere friendship between the Belgian and Congolese peoples.

Gentlemen of the Congolese Delegations, you have done as I requested and spoken frankly and honestly. Faced with the important matters under debate, you have shown your sense of responsibility and, on the other hand, I have no doubt that you are convinced of the complete loyalty and frankness of your Belgian co-debators.

You were promised independence over a year ago. We at this Round Table had the task of defining the means by which it could be achieved, and of fixing the date. This task has been accomplished in the shortest possible time and, I can fearlessly assert, in an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence almost without parallel in History.

At the commencement of your debates I asked you, Gentlemen, to speak out frankly, honestly, openly and without bitterness. You have responded to my appeal. Now perhaps you will permit me to speak to you in the same way.



The task we have accomplished during these hard-working, anxious weeks must logically project into the future by the establishment of vital co-operation between the future Congo State and Belgium. The co-operation is only possible if it is based on profound friendship between the two States. Such friendship implies mutual obligations : the leaders of the Congo State will be fully aware of them.

To-day, I can once more tell you how fully Belgium realises the great responsibility she will still bear in regard to the Congo. Belgium must provide the Congo with technical assistance. Under conditions which we have defined together, we are leaving you the qualified personnel of the Magistrature, the Administration, the Medical and Health Corps, and all other bodies devoted to the spiritual, moral and social welfare, the economic development and prosperity of your country.

The devotion to duty evidenced by so many men, the experience they have acquired over the years, can and must contribute to ensuring the stability and prestige of the Congo State.

We have no illusions concerning the immense work there is to do in the educational field; nor are we unaware of the ardent desire shared by so many of your compatriots to accede to all levels of education. We are also aware of the limited resources involved. We are convinced that the teachers and missionaries who

have devoted their lives to their work for so many years, must continue to pursue their mission.

Important scientific research centres have been set up in the Congo itself. These must be allowed to develop their activities, for let us not forget that on such selfless research work — which often seems to have little in common with the ordinary needs of everyday life — all economic progress will ultimately depend.

There are two universities in the Congo; they have an immense part to play. Belgium will help them, but she also knows that she must leave the door of the Congo's universities wide open to the Congolese.

In the financial sphere, Belgium is also fully conscious of her obligations. She has provided for substantial assistance in eliminating budget problems, and intends to promote both public and private investment. Sound management of currency and finances, capital investment, and balanced budgets are the essential factors of continued economic expansion which is the foundation of all social progress.

These, Gentlemen, are the obligations which Belgium, as a State, assumes in your regard. She knows, too, that this co-operation between our two countries cannot be complete unless it is based on human relationships. From this day on, it is essential that Africans and Europeans living in the Congo combine in one supreme, sincere and loyal effort to adapt their respective mentalities to the new form of co-operation and the new requirements which will arise as a result.

Gentlemen, you and those you represent are about to assume great responsibilities in regard to the thirteen

and a half million people, black and white, who make up the population of the Congo.

It is your task to ensure that the fundamental rights of these people are respected, both as to persons and property.

You will also be responsible for the entire Congolese nation. On the basis of certain original structures handed down by your ancestors which, even though they must be adapted to a certain extent, nevertheless still form an essential part of your heritage, it will be your task to build a modern society.

The Congo will inevitably experience some difficult moments. Never forget that perhaps, outside your borders, there are men with envious eyes seeking to take advantage of every sign of weakness and dissension.

As this Conference comes to an end, I would like to thank all of you, Belgians and Congolese, who by your work, your informed and far-seeing opinions and your understanding, have contributed to its success.

Believe me when, with all my heart, I say that I have no other wish than to see the future Congo State prosperous, stable and strong. The destiny of the Congo will always be the concern of the people of Belgium. The time has come for fraternal collaboration between two nations whose destinies have been closely linked for over eighty years. Together, in loyal and honest co-operation, they will be able to build the road which leads to an ever-brighter future.

Gentlemen of the Congolese delegations, I ask you to convey to your people the sincere expression of my confidence and friendship.

Mr. Paul BOLYA

President of the P.N.P. (National Progress Party).

Mr. Prime Minister,
Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The closing session of the Round Table Conference is both an end and a beginning. It is a milestone in history. As we are about to say farewell, may I be permitted to pay homage to the authors of this wonderful success; and in the first place to all those who made this conference possible, and who gave it their time, their competence and — in many cases — their devotion.

For the first time representatives of the Congolese people have discussed their country's future in the knowledge that their conclusions would determine their destiny. For the first time, they felt themselves to be not just the inhabitants of a colony whose opinions might or might not be listened to, but representatives of an entire people whose fate has been entrusted to their care. And we must all congratulate Belgium for realising that the accession to independence of our country was decided on at a conference table, in a spirit of mutual confidence and co-operation.

Over the last eighty years, we have learnt to know and appreciate the Belgians. Relations between coloniser and colonised are not generally conducive to mutual liking; many times we have had occasion to complain of certain actions by Europeans living in the Congo, but the resentment aroused by individuals was never directed at the Belgian people as a whole. Colonisation inevitably brings abuses in its wake. We denounced such abuses, and we wanted independence.

We desire this independence to be complete and untrammelled, and we shall eradicate any and every trace of colonialism from our country.

We are sure that Belgium will loyally help us to



attain our goal. We pay homage to the work accomplished by the Belgians in Africa; thanks to this brave, hard-working people the Congo has already reached a stage in its development where we may confidently face the future. We salute the thousands of administrative officials whose devotion to duty and generosity is wholly admirable. Our great wish is that they continue to work with us. We would recommend that all those who find themselves unable to adapt to the new order should leave the Congo, for their presence can only be detrimental to its harmonious development and the cordial relations between our country and Belgium. But to all those — and they are legion — who are inspired by feelings of friendship towards the young Congolese nation, we hold out our hand with the overwhelming desire to co-operate with them constructively.

The generosity shown by Belgium during the Round Table Conference has contributed much to eradicating the growing suspicion and resentment of many Congolese. Belgium was able to grasp the true significance of the urge that drove us on; she was able to adopt a policy of tolerance and generosity, thus sparing both herself and ourselves many dark and difficult hours. She has thus earned the gratitude and friendship of the Congolese people.

Many of us have fought valiantly for freedom. They

fought because the freedom of a whole people is not granted, but won. Congolese, Belgian and international opinion prophesied that this conference would be a failure, based on the conjecture that the Congolese would be unable to agree amongst themselves in order to attain the common goal : total independence of the Congo. The Common Front established by the political parties and the representatives of our tribal society is formal proof that such allegations were unfounded. Congolese leaders and delegates, you have indeed deserved well of your country — may I extend to you my heartiest congratulations.

Delegates from the four corners of the Congo, coming from widely different environments, met here to discuss their country's future. And these men welded themselves into a Common Front, setting aside — temporarily at least — their ethnic and ideological differences, their personal disagreements and their political rivalries. It may be asserted that each of them was obliged, at some point in the proceedings, to make a concession in the interests of all; each at one time or another, was able to put the welfare of the Congo above narrow considerations of prestige, personal vanity or party pride. And this is striking proof that the Congolese are worthy and capable of building a great nation based on democratic principles. We were able to reconcile

opinions which frequently conflicted, and come to unanimous support of the conclusions reached by Conference. May our continued activity, inspired by same selfless devotion to the cause, lead our beloved country to its full, harmonious development in conditions of law, order and peace; for accession to independence is only the beginning, a foundation on which we build a nation. There is no longer any place in Congo for extremist theories, sterile antagonism, fratricidal struggles. All of us here present are anxious to return to our country. Aware of our responsibilities, we know that the main task awaiting us is to prepare the people for their independence. Only by teaching them the true sense and infinite implications of this magic word shall we fulfil the engagement contracted here to ensure respect for the law and the safeguard of persons and property. Forgetting all that has separated us, remembering only those things which unite us, our two peoples — on a footing of absolute equality and mutual trust — will establish links which, in the very near future, will become apparent in the form of agreements and treaties freely entered into by both parties.

People of Belgium and people of the Congo, I appeal upon you to join with me in shouting : « Long live Belgium and long live the Independent Congo ».

Mr. Moïse TSHOMBE

President of the Conakat
(Confederation of Katanga Associations).

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Conakat and myself, I would like to express my pleasure at the satisfactory conclusion of this Round Table Conference.

We are proud and happy at the success achieved in regard to essential points, amongst which I might mention :

- the selection of June 30 as the date of the Congo's accession to independence, and the attribution of full sovereign powers to the Independent Congo;
- the agreement on measures designed to enable Congolese to participate, between now and June 30, in the implementation of the recommendations made at this Conference and in the government of the Congo, both in the offices of the Government General and in the provinces.

We are also very satisfied that an end has been put to the excessive centralisation under which the Congo was labouring, and that the Round Table Conference has resulted in the acknowledgement of the former provinces as political entities with all corresponding powers : a legislative assembly, a government proceeding from that assembly, autonomous administrative departments and finances.

Thanks to this basic reform, the Independent Congo of to-morrow will escape the dislocation which threatened it.

The Conference, not only in words but in the statutes of the new bodies, has also recognised the prime importance of the rural inhabitants who make up 80 % of the Congo's population, and of the tribal chieftains who are the traditional and actual representatives of the rural inhabitants whose advancement is one of our dearest aims.

We greatly hope that between now and June 30, and after the Congo's accession to independence, law,



order and peace will prevail in the Congo. We shall do everything in our power to ensure it.

We are fully conscious of the risk that the Independent Congo may lose the benefit of the social and economic progress bestowed on it by Belgium, and may even fall behind unless it continues to benefit from Belgian financial and technical assistance, and also unless new capital investments are forthcoming.

It is therefore with joy that we have taken note of the unanimous engagement contracted by the Congolese delegations to apply the principles of the Declaration of the Rights of Man in the Congo, to respect persons, property and investments, and to seek for bases of agreements which will notably include the treaties to be freely and independently signed with Belgium.

We are convinced that confidence will accordingly be reborn, for the greater good of all the inhabitants of the Congo : non-Belgians, Belgians and Congolese.

Mr. President,

At this point I would like to pay homage to Belgium. Whatever grievances may have been harboured at certain times on certain matters, we shall not forget the services which Belgium has rendered to the Congo and the breadth of vision which she has recently shown through her government policy.

I would particularly like to thank Mr. De Schrijver,

Minister of the Congo, for the realistic attitude and political honesty which he has displayed, and Mr. Scheyven for the enlightenment he has brought to financial and economic matters.

My thanks are also due to the Belgian Members of Parliament who have attended and spoken at the debates and during the committee work.

My thanks are also due to the Belgian Members of Mr. Henri Rolin, whose wise counsel has been appreciated by us all — so much so that some of us disregarded all his other resounding titles in favour of the one word « Professor » !

We would also extend our thanks to the President of the Conference, the office and the secretariat theirs was an arduous job well done.

Nor must we forget the invaluable assistance of our advisors.

Mr. President,

May I end by paying solemn homage to His Majesty the King of the Belgians, and to his illustrious predecessors whose devotion to the Congo is unanimously acknowledged.

Long live Belgium.

Long live the Independent Congo.

Mr. Henri ROLIN

Member of the Belgian Senate.

Mr. President,
My dear Colleagues,

The Socialist delegates at the Round Table have asked me to express on their behalf the joy and pride they feel at having been able to share in this work of supreme historic importance.

The task which was entrusted to us was, indeed, a capital one. Many Congolese delegates had for many months been campaigning in favour of immediate independence. However, they soon realised that on pain of remaining an empty and futile phrase, immediate independence could only signify one thing : independence at the earliest possible moment, that is : at the end of the indispensable period of time necessary to set up the institutions qualified to receive full powers from the hands of the Belgians administrators. Indeed, it is obvious that sovereign powers cannot be transferred to a void.

To grant the ardent and quasi-unanimous wish of the peoples of the Congo, it was therefore necessary to proceed urgently with the task of laying the foundations of a Congolese Government. It was not enough, though, to prepare for the advent of a Congolese Government; above all, it was necessary for such a Government to be acknowledged as a legitimate one. Indeed, the very diversity of your opinions and your environment made it impossible for the Belgian Government, even had it acted in all good faith and with the maximum of prudence, to select a group of men worthy of the highest office who stood any chance of being acknowledged in all regions of the country as the legitimate heads of the new State. No, the appointment of these men must depend on the results of proper elections freely held in each of the six provinces; and these six provinces, by means of a fundamental law which is the prelude to your constitution, must define the essential guarantees in respect of both individual and collective liberty to which,



as we have had occasion to realise, many tribal communities are profoundly attached and which all parties have bound themselves to respect.

We have now accomplished this initial task of preparing the ground for the first Congolese institutions. Important though it was, I realise that this task was nothing compared to that which you will have to tackle during the next four months.

As I believe I am — in age at least — the senior member of this Assembly, I would like in all friendliness to draw your attention to this point.

The first thing which lies before most of you is the election campaign, its fatigue and its special difficulties inherent to a country the size of yours with a body of electors in such unequal stages of development. Do I need to tell you that before you embark on any propaganda, you must assign yourselves the job of educating your people politically. Even before you may tell your voters what it is that differentiates your party from others and what are the special aims it is pursuing, you will have to inculcate in the Congolese electorate a sense of the nature of the institutions whose members they are called upon to elect, an awareness of the importance and gravity of the act they are about to undertake.

The next thing is to perfect your own education. You

have indeed complained on various occasions — and with reason — that only a few of you have hitherto been allowed to assume a very small part of the responsibility of governing your country. You are therefore very far from familiar with the varied and complex problems confronting the authorities administering the Congo. The annual report to the Belgian Houses of Parliament, the latest of which was distributed amongst you, will no doubt have enlightened you considerably as to the frightening complexity of the problems involved, on which, in future, you will have to pronounce judgment.

During the next four months, you will also wish to do your utmost to absorb the economic, social, educational and legal factors affecting your immense country and the matters with which you will necessarily have to deal as of June 30 next.

Many of you, moreover, will be called upon to take office at once as members of the colleges, as a result of the Resolution to which the Minister of the Congo has given his agreement. Others — and this is your fourth task — will play a less direct but no less important part in Brussels by helping with the elaboration of the last essential acts of the Belgian administration, especially and initially that of the fundamental law. This law will not only follow the Round Table Recommendations in fixing the terms under which the legislative and executive bodies are to be set up, both those of the central government and those in the provinces, but it will also, and until further notice, define their respective competency and responsibility so as to comply with what we perceive to be your twin ideals : national unity, and wide provincial autonomy.

The Brussels team will also collaborate in the drafting of the Belgo-Congolese Treaties. As I told you in a recent statement, it is vital that Belgium's aid should not be interrupted for even a single day either in the financial sphere to which you alluded just now, or in that of technical assistance. The conditions governing this assistance must therefore be defined with all speed so that we, your Parliamentary colleagues, may comply with the Government's request and ensure that the Belgian Houses continue to give you, generously and unstintingly, the assistance you so vitally need.

Finally, this same team of six men will have the task of preparing the draft parliamentary regulations and the preliminary draft of the Constitution which, of course, will be no more legally valid than the treaties until such time as they are approved and ratified by the authorities which, from June 30 on, will be entirely responsible therefor. These documents will, however, enable them to start off on a firm footing, with a sound working basis that will save you from wasting precious time in preliminary discussions.

My dear colleagues of the Congo, a vast and

awesome adventure awaits you. You certainly realise that many of us — or should I say, I personally — would have preferred to have been given more time to examine these problems, and even to have agreed on successive stages so that, gradually and without rush, you could have become familiar with your new responsibilities and taken them over one by one over a period of years.

However, in the light of the wave of liberation spreading throughout Africa, it was no longer possible to refuse the Congolese people this major promotion to the rank of a fully independent State, the master of its own destiny, even though you have hitherto been given a smaller share of the administration of your country than is the case in other territories.

Now that the decision has been made, let us put aside all hesitancy, regret and argument; all together let us turn our eyes to the future and do our utmost to ensure that the venture succeeds.

As far as I am concerned, at the outcome of this month's work I am very hopeful. We saw that you were young and enthusiastic. We perceived the urgency in your speeches, the ardour with which you are preparing and intending to take up the heavy responsibilities that will be yours. You are far-seeing men. On several occasions, you showed us that you were fully conscious of the obstacles that will rise in your path: your material insufficiencies, and — temporarily at least — your own limited knowledge. We perceive that you fully realise the inevitable need for outside help if you wish to avert disaster.

I would like to end by saying to you : « Have patience ». You will experience some difficult moments. There will be disappointments, setbacks and, from time to time, mistakes. We make mistakes in our own country and so will you. Be tolerant of each other. And, allow me to add, from now on be tolerant of us too, and try to get rid of the complex peculiar to colonised peoples by which the blame for every annoyance and setback is attributed to the authorities, and the inevitable mistakes or slowness of the administrative system are credited to the incompetence, hostility or even the dishonesty of the magistrates or officials concerned. Be moderate and just in your judgments if you yourselves wish to be justly and equitably judged later on.

Be united. We have hailed with joy the creation of your Common Front and the fact that you all rallied to it appeared to us as a good omen, even though this Common Front did not always succeed in establishing complete unity or unanimous agreement on a number of problems, as our Resolutions show. It proves, however, that you are all conscious of the need for unity, which allows us to hope that this attempt to substantiate your common nationality will be confirmed and strengthened during the coming months.

Many of you are unacquainted with the entire Congo, either because they have never left their provinces or because they have only travelled in one or two neighbouring regions. Now you have met each other. You have realised the differences in your respective attitudes, your preoccupations, aims and ideals. Occasionally you disagreed with each other; now you have begun to understand each other. Continue your efforts along these lines. Try to understand each other! Allow an old politician like myself to tell you that there is always something to be learnt from one's adversaries; that the most obnoxious policy almost always contains some motive or need, something which justifies it, which concerns you, and which you must in future take into account.

My last piece of advice is : « Work hard, and make everybody work hard ». The independence to which you will shortly accede is not a gold mine, nor is it a Garden

of Eden where your people may rest. Of the young states in Asia and Africa which recently gained their sovereignty, only those have succeeded whose peoples have harnessed themselves to a gigantic task far greater than any that was laid upon them in the days of colonialism. For the Congolese, independence must be the spark, the stimulant, the train of powder that touches off their ardour, increases their efforts tenfold, and urges them progressively on to improve their material and moral condition. Untold labour awaits your people. But what a truly magnificent reward awaits them at the top of the hill if only they consent to persevere in their efforts !

Belgium, as you have been told, will not leave you to strive alone, and I hope that many young people of my country will respond to your appeal and go to Africa in increasing numbers to work at your side, no longer as masters but as brothers.

Mr. Alphonse NGUVULU

President of the Cartel.

Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

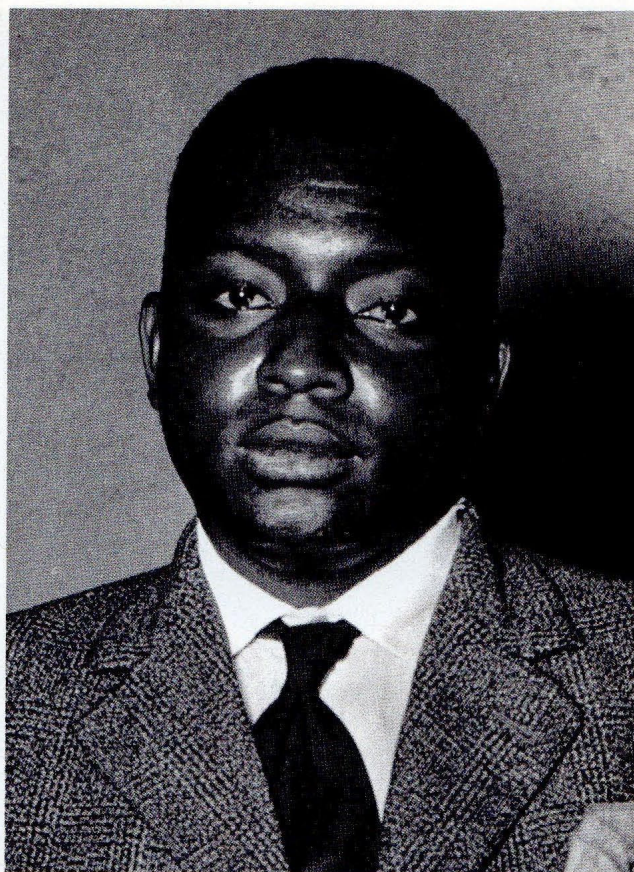
We have now come to the end of the historic days during which the Representatives of Belgium and the Congo negotiated the independence of our beloved country.

On behalf of the parties forming the Cartel, may I be permitted to express our joy and satisfaction at the agreement reached, an agreement which we are convinced will be a prelude to sincere and loyal co-operation between our two countries.

I would like to take this opportunity of extending my sincere thanks to our President, Mr. Lilar, who directed our work with good humour and impartiality. Thanks to him, we were able to express our opinions freely and frankly. Some people look upon us as extremists. This is not true, but it was our desire to state clearly the profound aims and ideals of the great mass of the Congolese population.

May I also thank the Members of Parliament present at the Round Table who have been kind enough to listen attentively to our statements and who, to-morrow, will be the spokesmen through whom our will shall be made known to Parliament. Amongst those Members of Parliament, some have distinguished themselves. In this respect, I would mention Messrs. Rolin, Housiaux and Moyersoen. They may rest assured that we in the Congo will follow their activities with close attention.

I would also extend my thanks to Their Excellencies



the Ministers of the Congo, who were the promoters of the Conference and who granted us every facility to enable us to work efficiently.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the Belgian people for their hospitality and their deep understanding of our aims and ideals. Thanks to their wisdom, there will be no « Algerian War » in the Congo.

It would be unthinkable to end without mentioning our Advisors, whose invaluable assistance has materially contributed to our success in solving the complicated technical problems laid before us.

With all our heart, we hope that a fruitful and durable friendship will unite our two peoples, and that together we shall do great things. Alliance and friendship cannot be forced; supreme wisdom dictates that they shall be made possible and enduring.

Long live Belgium.

Long live the Independent Congo.

Mr. Eugène N'DJOKU

President of the Mongo Union.

Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Mongo Union, I would first like to thank all those who have worked together at the Round Table. I am overjoyed at the spirit of confidence and co-operation in which our work has been accomplished. I believe that the Belgian Government, Members of Parliament and the Congolese Delegations together have succeeded in a magnificent venture never before attempted in Africa. For the first time, a country is about to pass directly from the status of a colony to that of an independent nation. Speaking in the name of all those present and in that of all Congolese I would proclaim our gratitude to Belgium for her bold initiative.

Now I turn to my brothers. Because Belgium has placed her trust in us, it is now up to us to show ourselves worthy of it. Tomorrow our responsibilities will be great. All our former resentment, our antagonisms, our rancour must go by the board, so that we may all tackle the supreme task which awaits us. Do not be afraid to look at things squarely, and do not imagine that just because we now hold the reins of power, all the Congo's problems will solve themselves. A young nation runs a great many risks; there will be pressure put on us from within and without; the great mass of the people, sometimes deluded by fallacious statements



in the past, will not immediately realise the full significance of independence. It is also up to us to undergo our political apprenticeship, to avoid unrest, to protect ourselves from external dangers, to make the people understand that law and order are essential to our work, and that everybody must work harder to ensure that our independence reaches its full degree of significance. The extent and importance of the task awaiting us will therefore be fully apparent to all. I appeal to you all to return to the Congo full of enthusiasm for the future, but with an acute sense of the responsibilities involved. Then all together, peacefully, joyfully and laboriously, we may truly bring this unique African experiment to a successful conclusion and transform our Congo into a united, powerful and prosperous nation.

Long live Independence.

Long live the Congo.

Long live Belgium.

Mr. Charles du BUS de WARNAFFE

Member of the House of Representatives.

Mr. President,

Gentlemen of the Congolese Delegations,

On August 20, 1908, the two Belgian Houses of Parliament passed the law ratifying the treaty whereby the Congo was ceded to Belgium.

Fifty-two years later, they are preparing to pass the Provisional Basic Law which is the prelude to the imminent accession to independence of the Congo.

After half a century, the union of a parent state and its colony is coming to an end, and a new era is dawning in the history of a nation with whose destiny both our peoples have been intimately associated.

At this Round Table which we are about to leave, the foundations of this new destiny were laid.

My parliamentary friends and myself, together with our colleagues in the other political parties, have shared in your work for the space of one month and participated — extremely actively in some cases — in its successful conclusion.

At the beginning, you of the Congo and we of Belgium observed each other like strangers meeting for the first time. But the distance separating us has grown progressively less, and the establishment of personal contacts has helped to bridge the gap. Frank opinions were exchanged, both between one Congolese delegation and another and between Africans and Whites; and accordingly we have all come to know each other better.

Allow me to express the hope that from this better knowledge mutual trust will be born, and that everything will contribute to its justification and strengthening in the future, whether this trust exists between the political leaders and tribal chieftains of the Congo or between Africans and Belgians.



Mutual trust is the result of mutual frankness and the desire to understand one another better. Trust begets infinite possibilities of fruitful co-operation between individuals and nations who appreciate each other and are firmly resolved to help each other for the common good. Let this be the ambition of both our countries.

The task which confronts you from now on is overwhelming : you yourselves will discover its immensity, its complexity and its difficulties as you begin to tackle it. I would be a very raw Member of Parliament indeed if I did not realise how many causes of disagreement there will be in your public life. But every time one of you here spoke to his fellow-countrymen, calling them his brothers, I said to myself that you would understand the full significance of St. Exupery's words : « Only those who work together are truly brothers ».

To work together, united in will, towards the same goal — which in this case is the creation and development of your new State — this is the great adventure on which the brotherhood of men and women of your country is about to embark. Stand shoulder to shoulder; let nothing deter you from achieving so high an ideal; and never forget that, far removed from the sterile forms of nationalism which set people at variance, but as partners in the brotherhood of man, the Belgian people is always ready to help you.

Take the hand outstretched to you, so that to-morrow the engagements you have contracted, and those you have been given, all of which were ratified by us in the last few days, may become a definite reality.

I do not know what national flag you intend to adopt for your new State. Whatever form it takes, I hope

you will keep the star. Let it shine bright and pure in the sky of your ideals; let it guide you to the great destiny promised to what I hope will « de facto » and not « de jure », a friendly B Congolese Community.

I salute the future you are about to build.



Mr. Antoine Mwenda MUNONGO

Great Chief of the Bayeke People

Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Gentlemen,
My dear friends,

My colleagues of the tribal authorities and rural representatives group have asked me to be their spokesman for the last time.

In their name, Mr. President, I thank you for the great courtesy with which you yourself and all those who have taken the chair at this Conference and its committees have conducted the debates, and for their kind attention to us at all times.

In their name also, I would express my deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to Their Excellencies Mr. De Schrijver and Mr. Scheyven. Called upon by the King to take charge of the Ministry of the Congo at a crucial moment in Belgium's history when their country was swathed in an atmosphere of deep gloom which moved me personally to sentiments of anger and revolt, they have succeeded in maintaining great dignity and grandeur. Their attitude towards us Congolese was one of loyalty, and this will add lustre to Belgium's honour and make this Conference a unique event in the annals of colonisation and decolonisation — in a word, unique in the history of national relationships.

I would also like to thank Their Excellencies the Ministers and Members of Parliament who have contributed much to lifting this Conference out of the deep ruts into which it sometimes fell.

Finally, my thanks are due to all our Congolese friends who were kind enough to lend a favourable ear to the opinions we set forth on behalf of the tribal and rural committees. I thank them for having been good enough to understand that there is something authentically African in our beloved Congo, something which



must be preserved, and which must serve as a foundation on which to build the impressive structure of a modern State. Above all, on behalf of the peoples of the Congo, I thank them for having understood that you cannot change everything in a day without causing intolerable suffering, and for appreciating that the co-operation of us chieftains, as I have said on various occasions, will give them the backing of our legitimate authority and the benefit of our ancestral experience in the leadership of the Congolese people. By acting as they have done, the political leaders, appreciating the value of our viewpoint, have associated our forebears with the historic hours we have just experienced. And this is a thing of great moment, and one which will enrich the Independent Congo during the coming months and years. Marching sturdily along the road to the future, straining to accelerate its progress, the Congo will nevertheless have its own history and its own fund of wisdom.

May I also respectfully extend my thanks to His Majesty King Baudouin who, as we know, has followed our debates with anxiety and emotion. We, the chieftains and representatives of the rural peoples, most sincerely hope that the heir of King Leopold II, who gave our Congo its intangible borders, will agree to lead us during the coming years so that we may make use of all the new institutions with which we are to be

endowed for the gradual building of a nation founded on a solid rock of sentiments shared.

Before I became a chief, I worked for eighteen years in the Public Prosecutor's Office under the device : « Jus, Justitia, Lex ». I had occasion to estimate the worth of many men and things, and I am bound to state that our beloved Congo will never benefit from the highest principles of law and justice unless the law is applied and justice rendered on behalf of a common ideal and in the name of an undisputed symbol. This is another reason why we beg His Majesty to assume personal leadership of the Congo, and assist us in creating our own symbols. This is why I beseech those of our Congolese friends now hesitating on the threshold of independence to accept our theory. Our independence will be no whit the less, and we shall show the world something which will help it to appre-

ciate us and force it to extend its beneficial friendship to our land.

I must not resume my seat without a word about European advisors. In this room, we have heard certain opinions expressed, and it was with full knowledge of the matters at stake that we consorted with our advisors Messrs. Mineur and Maisin, for four weeks. I would not pay them the homage they deserve for having made available to us their knowledge, their experience and their profound attachment to the Congo and its inhabitants. This they did both day and night, and we have often been speechless with admiration at their devotion. May I express our deepest gratitude to these gentlemen. We shall always remember the invaluable help they gave us, which we take to be a happy omen of the help we may expect from all the countless representatives of Belgium in the Congo.

Mr. Jean BOLIKANGO

ASSORECO Delegate
(Association of Upper Congo Peoples)

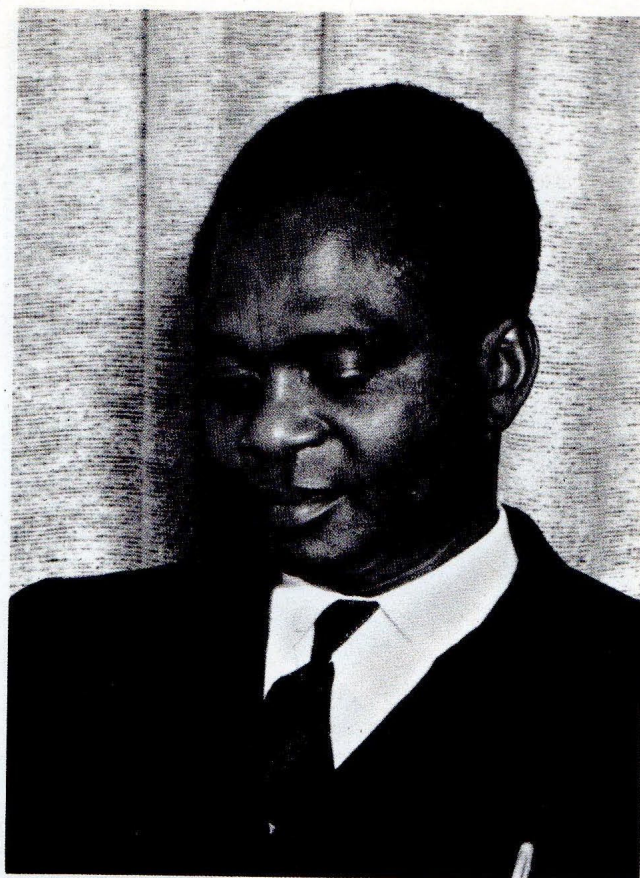
Mr. President,
Gentlemen,

At this final session of the Belgo-Congolese Round Table Conference, I must not omit to express my sincere gratitude to the Belgian delegation which participated in our work, and to the various Congolese delegations for the altruistic sentiments which caused them to place the supreme interests of their country above all lesser interests. My homage is also due to you, Gentlemen of the Belgian delegations, who have shown at this Round Table a great sense of historical necessity coupled with a deep friendship for our country. I salute you for this, and I thank you, not just out of politeness or diplomacy, but because this homage is no more than you deserve.

Your King Leopold II was a great collector of African lands and the founder of the Congo State. You have joined us in liberating the Congo State, and in building its national independence. No Congolese can ever forget it, and our country's history will bear witness to it as long as the Congolese nation shall survive.

In the annals of recent years, many under-developed countries have acceded to independence. Yet there is something highly exceptional and exemplary about the independence of the Congo and the status of future Belgo-Congolese relations.

You have joined with us in desiring that this independence shall be complete and unfettered. In establishing the status of future Belgo-Congolese relations, both you and we have been guided solely by the great principle of natural and necessary mutual assistance extended by a highly civilised nation to an insufficiently developed country. This principle is one of the imperative prerequisites of co-existence between the nations of



to-day. By placing the future relations between our two lands under the aegis of this principle, we have placed them high above all dissension and misunderstanding. By so doing, we have set a fine example which, it seems to me, may well herald the dawn of a wonderful new era not only in the relations between Belgium and the Congo, but also in those between Western Europe and Africa as a whole.

Before leaving this Round Table whose labours here have been so fruitful in regard to the future of both our countries, I have one more point to raise, which is : the question of maintaining the « de facto » supranational relations now existing between the Congo, Ruanda and Urundi.

I appeal to you not to loosen the ties with which your predecessors bound us forty years ago.

I know that this matter cannot be definitely settled at the Round Table. However, I would like a special committee to develop out of this Round Table, in which Congolese, Ruandese and Urundese, with the assistance of Belgium, may prepare their common future and lay the foundations of the supranational unity of Central Africa.

All this is bound up with the future of our young country. In this solemn hour, I am proud and happy to salute Belgium and the Independent Congo State.

Mr. Anicet KASHAMURA

**Vice-Président of CERE
(African Regroupment Centre)**

Mr. President,
Gentlemen,

As a page of history is turned, I believe it to be my duty, on behalf of my party, to thank all those who have contributed to the development of our country.

We have indeed known times when some of us were unjustly treated and exploited, and this often gave rise to barbaric sentiments of hate and racial discrimination. Now we must forget all that. Let us bury the past with its heavy burden of shame and honour, and turn our eyes confidently towards the future.

Our party, the CERE, has hitherto adopted an extremist attitude, and at one point this was entirely justified. But now we are confronted with new problems, I declare that we are ready to revise our position so as to allow everybody — Congolese and Whites alike, workers, peasants and tribal chieftains — to reconcile their points of view and live in amity under the same Congolese sky.



When we fought against colonialism, we demanded only one thing : freedom and independence. Belgium has granted our request, and we have never regarded her as an enemy nation. Indeed, for good or ill History has linked us to Belgium and we intend to maintain this friendship, especially if both parties continue to honour their engagements as defined at this Round Table.

To lose this friendship, or to put an end to it, would be dangerous for the Congo, a rich country which arouses envy in many parts of the world.

Mr. Hilaire LAHAYE

Member of the House of Representatives.

Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the name of the Liberal Observers, I am happy to join in the homage paid by the spokesman of the Congolese delegations and by my parliamentary colleagues to our President Mr. Lilar, Deputy Prime Minister; to the two honourable Ministers of the Congo and Ruanda-Urundi; to the two Vice Presidents, Messrs. Bolya and Kanza; to the office which directed our work; to the services rendered by the Analytical Department and by Inforcongo, which assisted the office; and of course to the Congolese delegations, the pertinency and importance of whose contribution I have pleasure in acknowledging.

As our work draws to a close and we are about to go our separate ways, I believe we are bound to state that no Round Table has ever served a greater purpose.

Furthermore, it is by close contact with our fellow-men and the ideals they uphold that we may get to know and appreciate them better.

I would like to repeat that, insofar as we Belgians are concerned, never has any Conference attained such a degree of importance.

The spirit of honesty and frankness which inspired the debates and guided the exchange of opinions has certainly convinced us of the will of the Congolese delegations to achieve the goals they have set themselves : to accede to independence through lawful means, and to create in the heart of Central Africa a democracy where life will be worth the living and where the respect of the persons and property of each and every inhabitant will not be an empty phrase.



If our Round Table Conference — shortly to be followed by the Economic, Financial and Social Conference — has contributed to the achievement of these objectives, then we may certainly claim that our work here in Brussels is of historic importance.

The Congo Committees and Parliament must now study the bills which the Government will shortly introduce. This by no means less important task will doubtless be accomplished in the light of our work here at this Round Table, the many reports embodying the suggestions made by the various delegations, and the final recommendations of the Conference, with the sole aim of ensuring the future of the Independent Congo and the mutual interests of our two countries.

If, during these weeks of close co-operation, we have been able to lay the solid foundations of a friendship beneficial to us all, we shall have set an example to the entire world.

The Liberal Observers formulate their most sincere wishes for the happiness and prosperity of the future Independent Congo and of all its inhabitants, Congolese and Europeans alike.

We wish you the best of luck.

Mr. Jason SENDWE

of the BALUBAKAT
(Katanga Baluba Association)

Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the name of the Balubakat-Fedeka-Atcar Cartel, I would like to express the joy and pride of the Katanga peoples whose representatives we are : our joy at the approaching days of independence so long awaited, so ardently desired, and our pride at belonging to the great nation which the Congo is destined to become.

We are convinced that apart from the concrete results achieved, with which we are in complete and enthusiastic agreement, the Round Table Conference has done much to strengthen the ties between Congolese and Congolese, and those between the Congo and Belgium.

I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to extend our deepest gratitude to His Majesty King Baudouin for his unfailing paternal solicitude; to Mr. Lilar, whose task was a particularly arduous one and whose good humour was often sorely tried; to His Excellency Mr. De Schrijver, Minister of the Congo, who has been able to realise the full extent of the confidence placed in him by the Congolese delegations; to His Excellency Mr. Scheyven, the Minister with whom we are happy to be able to co-operate in the field of political economy; to Mr. Rolin, Senator, who has earned the affection of all the Congolese present at the Round Table; and to all those who have ensured that the Round Table Conference to-day reaches its harmonious and satisfactory conclusion.

All of us have appreciated the good will displayed by the Belgian representatives at the Round Table, and we have all been deeply moved by the sympathy and friendship evidenced by the people of Belgium.

We are convinced that all Belgians living in the



Congo will work with us just as enthusiastically in building our country. As much work remains to be done in the Katanga as in the rest of the Congo. All those wishing to contribute their loyal efforts are, and always will be, our friends.

Our Cartel solemnly pledges itself to do its utmost to build a strong, united Congo and a happy, prosperous Katanga.

Fully conscious of the responsibilities incumbent on the Congolese political parties, we would like, during the coming months, to prepare the people of Katanga for independence, which must be peacefully and lawfully achieved.

To-morrow, we shall be called upon to take our share of administrative authority, and we shall ensure that the engagements contracted here by the Congolese delegations are honoured in the Katanga, notably those pertaining to respect of the law and the security of persons and property.

Permit me now to say a few words to my Katanga friends present in this room : tribal chieftains and representatives of the Conakat, Congolese Union, Congolese National Movement and General Congolese Federation parties. Our disagreements have often been acute, but we have nevertheless managed to unite in pursuit of the same objectives.

Mr. De Schrijver recently reminded us that «one fights against ideas and not against men». Certainly we still hold divergent views on many points, but these are abstract ideas peculiar to the political parties concerned and which are a feature of democracy; they are moreover aimed at a far higher target than mere personal antagonism : the welfare of the Katanga and of the entire Congo State.

And this is true all over the Congo, whose represen-

tatives came to Brussels and learnt to know and appreciate each other.

It is my fervent hope that those who have been able to create a Common Front at this Table, will be guided by the same principle as they lead the Congo to independence.

Long live Belgium.

Long live the Independent Congo.

Long live the King.



Mr. Gervais BAHIZI

President of the Progressist Rural Alliance.

Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Progressist Rural Alliance which I represent, and in my own name, I have pleasure in stating and confirming the satisfaction and interest with which I have followed and taken part in the debates which took place during the Round Table Conference.

It is my firm intention to pay homage to all those who collaborated in the great task of enabling the Congo to accede to the independence to which it is fully entitled. I sincerely hope that we shall be able to co-operate fully with the Belgian people.

I wish happiness and prosperity to the young State



which the Congo will become on June 30, 1960 — a historic and solemn date on which we invite the entire Belgian people to rejoice with us.

Long live His Majesty King Baudouin.

Long live Belgium.

Long live the Independent Congo.

Mr. Patrice LUMUMBA

President of the M.N.C.
(Congolese National Movement - Lumumba Tendency)

Mr. Prime Minister,
Mr. President,
Gentlemen of the Belgian delegations,
My dear Congolese brothers,

At this moment when the Round Table Conference is closing down, we beg to be allowed to speak in the name of the Congolese National Movement and to express its thoughts and feelings.

We are particularly satisfied with the results of the negotiations which we have just conducted with the representatives of the Belgian Government and Parliament.

We demanded the immediate and unconditional independence of our country. We have just won it.

We demanded that this independence should be complete and absolute. The Belgian Government, in compliance with our demand, assures us that Belgium will retain no measure of control after June 30, 1960. On that date, the Congo will accede to international sovereignty. The Congolese Government and the Belgian Government will be proud to sit side by side at international assemblies where they will defend their common interests.

We demanded that, between now and June 30, the Congolese be closely associated with the government of the country. We have just obtained satisfaction by means of the creation of permanent colleges attached to the Minister of the Congo, the Governor General and the Provincial Governors. From to-day on, until the proclamation of independence, the political and administrative management of the Congo will be assumed jointly by the Congolese through these colleges, and by the representatives of Belgium. No decision will be



taken without our consent, either in Belgium or in the Congo.

We are overjoyed at these magnificent results, obtained by means of peaceful and friendly negotiations.

Belgium has realised the store we set by our liberty and our human dignity. She understands that the Congolese people is not unfriendly towards her, but that they merely demand the abolition of the colonial status which shamed the twentieth century.

The good will and good faith of the Belgian representatives at the Round Table Conference were truly remarkable. We encountered no systematic opposition from Belgian members of Parliament. We may assert that the Round Table Conference was to all intents and purposes conducted by the Congolese, for every time we came to an agreement between ourselves on one point or another, the Belgian Government and Parliamentary delegates rallied to it. We are all grateful to them for this.

We are now about to return home « with our independence in our baggage », proud to be able to give our people the joy of knowing themselves free and independent.

While our brothers in Kenya, Nyasaland, South

Africa and Angola are still fighting for their accession to autonomy, we ourselves have acceded to the rank of a sovereign state with no transition.

The fact that Belgium has liberated the Congo from the colonial regime we were no longer prepared to accept, has won her the friendship and esteem of the Congolese people.

We desire this friendship to be enduring and free of all forms of hypocrisy. We shall thus prove to the world that the principle of friendship between nations is one of real significance.

From to-day on we shall forget the mistakes of the past and all the causes of dissension, and concentrate solely on the wonderful future that unfolds before us.

We beg you, Mr. Prime Minister, to be kind enough to convey to His Majesty King Baudouin our heartfelt expressions of liking and friendship.

We hope that he will do us the honour of being present at the proclamation of our independence.

We thank His Excellency the Minister of the Congo and all the Belgian Members of Parliament for their kind attention to our statements.

We would also thank His Excellency Mr. Lilar, who presided over the Round Table debates with patience and deep understanding.

We would also salute that great and worthy jurist, His Excellency Mr. Rolin; his personal contribution was invaluable to us during the work of this Conference.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity of hanking Mr. Van Hemelrijck, former Minister of the Congo, who paved the way to Congolese Independence. We hope he will be present at the proclamation of the Congo's independence, and that no more tomatoes will be flung at him.

The fact that this Conference closes in amity and to the satisfaction of all the Congolese delegations is a good omen for the relations which are to be established between the Congo and Belgium. These relations will be stamped with the seal of friendship and mutual help between our two countries.

Our independence, which is to be proclaimed four months from now, is only the first stage in our emancipation. Having conquered our political liberty after a fight lasting many months, we must now bend every effort to achieve :

1. the creation, in all parts of the Congo, of an atmosphere of confidence and calm so that the new institutions may be set up in a spirit of joy and fraternal co-operation;
2. the eradication of every vestige of colonialism, notably by the immediate elimination of every trace

of racial discrimination and the unjust laws passed under the colonial regime;

3. the immediate cessation of the oppressive measures currently being taken against the local population in some regions of the Congo;
4. the consolidation of national independence by the creation of a stable and prosperous national economy. Our independence will have no significance unless it contributes to the improvement of living standards of the worker and peasant classes.

We shall also fight against every attempt to dislocate our national territory. The greatness of the Congo is based on the preservation of its political and economic entity.

As for the Europeans living in the Congo, we would ask them to stay and help the young Congolese State in building up its national strength. We need their help. We guarantee them the security of their property and their persons. It is with their collaboration that we wish to create the Congolese nation, in which all will find their share of happiness and satisfaction.

The doors of the Congo are wide open to all men of good will wishing to help us. On the other hand, we shall not tolerate any persons or powers with imperialist aims. We prefer liberty with poverty to wealth with tyranny.

Capital investment in the Congo will be respected, for we are an honest people. As for the Belgian civil servants now working in the Congo, we would ask them to serve our government with the same loyalty as they served the Belgian government. They may all be proud of their humanitarian contribution to a work of national reconstruction.

A young State, we shall need the advice and technical assistance of Belgium. We sincerely hope that this assistance will not be refused.

We would appeal fraternally to the democratic youth of Belgium to come and serve the Congolese State. Here you will find a brotherly nation in need of other brothers.

As for the tribal chieftains, we would ask them to acknowledge the need for evolution and to co-operate with the political leaders in building their country. We shall reserve them an honourable place in our future institutions.

Citizens of the Congo, we ask you to unite and combine your efforts so as to build a great, united, strong, hardworking and prosperous nation in the heart of Central Africa.

Long live the Independent Congo.

Long live Belgium.

Long live the friendship between our two peoples.

Mr. Albert KALONJI

President of the M.N.C.
(Congoese National Movement - Kalonji Tendency)

Gentlemen,

The President, Their Excellencies the Ministers and Belgian Members of Parliament have doubtless realised by now that we thank them for the work accomplished here and especially for the spirit in which it proceeded. At the risk of repeating what has already been said, I would also like to express my personal satisfaction and gratitude.

On November 1, 1959, when my party launched a formal and decisive appeal in Elisabethville in favour of a Belgo-Congoese Round Table, we knew that the media of unilateral demand and of repression could no longer lead us to a solution which would be wholly satisfactory to our people. We proposed that negotiations should take place between valid spokesmen of either side. These negotiations have just taken place, and I believe we have a right to view them with pride and happiness.

In record time, and by generally non-violent methods, the Congo has risen from the colony stage to the dignity of an independent State. This is the fruit of the unanimous will of our people. It is also the fruit of far-sighted Belgian policy. I believe the moment is well chosen to make this fact clear.

We have won our independence.

We shall now ensure that this word is given its complete and profound significance.

The real independence we demand presupposes a democratic and social order in the Congo.



Our present ambition and our essential task may be summed up as follows :

- that the powers of government shall be wielded for the good of all, and that they shall guarantee the rights of minorities, ethnic or otherwise;
- that the living standard of the working and peasant classes shall be progressively raised and that our people shall increasingly accede to the benefits of education and the inculcation of human values.

We intend to achieve this task with the help of all those who are sincerely disposed to respect the new Congoese authorities, serve our people and understand our needs.

On the basis of the last few weeks, I believe I may assert that the Belgian people and their leaders are in the forefront of such co-operation. The Economic and Social Conference to be held in April will, I am sure, confirm this opinion. I think I may safely say that this result has been achieved thanks to the humane understanding, patience and good will of the men representing Belgium at this Round Table. Let us thank them in the name of the Independent Congo.

Mr. Jean-Médard ILUMBE

Representing the tribal chieftains.



Mr. President,

In the Congo, every important political or social event necessarily involves a certain amount of ceremony which is both the symbol of the occurrence and the medium through which it takes place.

It is absolutely necessary for the Congo's accession to independence on June 30, 1960, to take the form of one big manifestation, identical in character all over the Congo, so as to make it a tangible reality for the vast mass of the Congolese.

To our mind, therefore, the event should receive a far greater celebration than the inevitable official ceremony at top government level.

Various kinds of manifestations come to mind, but we would take the liberty of suggesting one formula that will be completely comprehensible to all Africans.

We are thinking of something along these lines :

In our country, people of equal standing who wish to maintain friendly relations exchange gifts, which

symbolise good will on both sides and a mutual desire for good relations and friendly assistance. We believe that if the country's accession to independence were symbolised by such a manifestation repeated hundreds or thousands of times all over the Congo, we should be summing up the exact spirit and significance of the event whilst placing it under the sign of close friendship between the Congo and Belgium.

Long live the Independent Congo.

Long live Belgium.

Mr. Gabriel Kitenge

National President of the Congolese Union.

Mr. President,
Your Excellency,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I do not wish to repeat the thanks so often expressed by my fellow-countrymen. We all acknowledge that the Congo has entered a new era in its history : the era of independence.

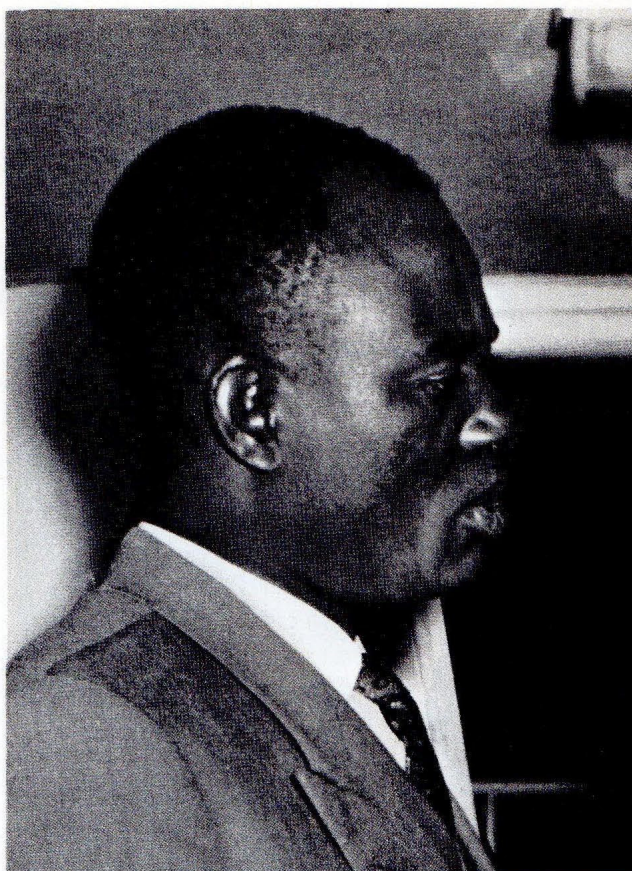
I would address myself first to my brothers in the Congo. Proclaiming our independence is not everything. Independence has no meaning unless the inhabitants — the Congolese people — stand to benefit from it.

We must work, and work hard, in order to succeed. We shall only be able to do so through unity, tolerance and mutual agreement.

This is the only course open to us.

Federalists and Unitarists, we have nevertheless managed to agree amongst ourselves.

The name by which our Government will be called will be neither Federalist nor Unitarist.



Now I must say a few words to our Belgian friends. During this Round Table Conference we have shown that we need, and will continue to need each other.

To both Congolese and Belgians, I would say that unity is essential : the unity of citizens equal in the eyes of the law, the unity of two friendly nations on an equal footing.

Long live Belgium.

Long live the Independent Congo.

Mr. Auguste DE SCHRIJVER

Minister of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi.

Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the name of my colleague Mr. Scheyven and in my own, I would first like to express our gratitude to those who directed this Conference : to Mr. Lilar, the President; Messrs. Bolya and Kanza, the two Vice-Presidents; and to all the staff of the office who were responsible for organising the work, I would like to extend the thanks of the Government.

I am also grateful, of course, to all you Gentlemen who came here from the Congo and who, through the channel of your delegations, worked so hard and so competently at the Round Table Conference, on the Committee working on infrastructure or the Committee on elections, in the office, on the Drafting Committee or in Plenary Session. You have given the best of yourselves, and I thank you.

My sincere thanks are also due to my colleagues in the Senate and the House for their active collaboration. They were present here as the representatives of the Parliamentary Institution as such, and they may now report to that Institution all they have heard and said here. I would like to thank some of them especially for their personal co-operation — you have all mentioned Mr. Rolin, Minister of State, and others of my colleagues — and for their personal contribution to the legal work of our Round Table Conference.

A final word of gratitude is due to all the staff of the Record and Reports offices who were our devoted helpers.

Allow me to add a special word of thanks to my colleagues and to the Advisors of the Ministry of the Congo who themselves came here from the Congo. I would like to say publicly how much I appreciate their unflinching, devoted collaboration.

Gentlemen, together we have written a page of



History which, until now, remained blank — a page which is unique in the annals of relationships which have developed between the so-called colonial powers and their colonies, when the desire for independence raised its head.

Many of you have remarked on the extremely short period of time during which the Congo is to rise from its status as a colony, however temperate our administration of it may have been, to that of an absolutely independent State. Sovereign powers will be acknowledged as of June 30 in respect of the peoples of the Congo.

This page of History was written in one short month as the result of certain consultations and talks which preceded it. Let us all be proud of the result we have achieved.

First of all, I would like to express my satisfaction with the work itself of this Conference. The atmosphere so reserved at first, in which the first debates took place between delegates who were probably inclined to regard each other with suspicion, disappeared as the days went by; the suspicion melted into trust and the reserve into efficient and effective co-operation. Out of this co-operation came the resolutions we adopted yesterday and which your delegations have endorsed not only with their signature but with their

words. For it is the moral signature of the Congo, legally represented by your delegations, which stands behind the resolutions that are the basis and foundation of the legal framework which must now be prepared by the Belgian parliament so that you may present it to your nation on July 1.

My thoughts to-day are with the peoples of the Congo for whom you have laboured here: it is for them that the capital importance of the decisions made during the coming weeks will be made manifest.

The future of the Congo is in the hands of its people from this day on.

We feel some apprehension at the weight of responsibility laid on the shoulders of the Congolese leaders. These will be political leaders, tribal chieftains, those who in a day or two will be assuming their first responsibilities as members of the colleges. And especially those men who, in a few months' time, will be elected as deputies and senators, provincial councillors, the members of your executive bodies in every province, and the ministers of the Congo as a whole. To them all, we wish now and in the future: « Courage and good luck! ».

My thoughts are also with you, Gentlemen, who yesterday addressed the peoples of the Congo, appealing to them to keep the laws, work closely with the administration, and co-operate fully with Belgium.

This train of thought conjures up a mental picture of the Congo, where some 100.000 Europeans live. I am now speaking to all those Europeans over there, and to my white compatriots in particular. I appeal to them in the same words, asking them to keep the laws, obey the authorities of to-day and those who will take office to-morrow, and respect the laws of the people in whose midst they live.

Gentlemen of the Congo, your appeal is closely bound up with mine. Together we call upon the inhabitants of the Congo, Black and White, who are about to forge their common destiny in a few weeks' time.

My eyes and thoughts are turned towards my white compatriots who have been worried and anxious during these last few weeks and who, in their hearts, find it so difficult to forget the past which conditioned their lives. I appeal to them to think it over and to accept the situation.

But, apart from this minority group, my thoughts are particularly directed towards the vast majority of Belgians in the Congo: planters, industrialists, traders, missionaries, civil servants, those who bring healing and science to the wilderness, the officers of the Congo Army — all those who shared in the great work of civilisation begun under Leopold II. To all these, I say: « Belgium has confidence in you. Your presence there from now on will be a permanent message of good will,

henceforth devoid of any legal basis, but with an infinitely more solid and effective moral foundation ». I would say too: At this moment, at this Conference where all the Congolese delegations have spoken and proclaimed their desire to live in friendship with Belgium and have the Belgian people co-operate with them for as long as possible — for they consider that our presence is indispensable — at this time, my friends and fellow-countrymen in the Congo, let your hearts beat in unison with mine, and in unity with those of all Congolese here present. Together, we ask that you remain; together, we desire that your continued presence shall be truly effective. Banish all your fears — the future will prove us right as security and peace prevail ».

My thoughts now go out to all those who will offer their personal co-operation to the State, under whose authority they will be working as of July 1, and especially to the civil servants and the Army officers there. The new Congolese State must not forget that there are also Belgians living in the Congo. You need have no fear that Belgium will question your authority any more than she questions your loyalty. She says to her sons: « Serve this Congo loyally, for it was forged by Belgians amongst the ranks of nations; help this people with your ardour, your enthusiasm and your knowledge. They will be grateful to you. Your mother-country is full of gratitude towards those who, down in the Congo, take up her work where she leaves off ».

I would now speak to all of you present at this Table; to those who will be coming to Brussels soon; those who, at the Minister's side, are to set up the Political Committee and who will have so much to do during the coming weeks.

My words are aimed at those of you who, in a few weeks, will be members of the provincial colleges or attached to the Governor General's staff and who, jointly with the Provincial Governors and the Governor General as the case may be, will take over the reins of government in the provinces and the Congo as a whole.

Gentlemen, we associate you legally and cordially in the management of the interests of your fellow-countrymen.

We are counting on you, because you are the men who will actually form the transition authority essential to the reinforcement and stabilisation of the regime which is to see the light on July 1. On your attitude will depend the success or otherwise of the intricate and gigantic task of organising independence through co-operation, objectivity, hard work and tolerance.

I am personally counting on you.

You are about to return to the Congo, and your every word reveals the joy and satisfaction you feel. I am sure that each word you speak will be a message

of peace, understanding and agreement so sorely needed by us all.

You are indeed aware that your words must be directed at tranquillising the anxiety which has gained the Congo. You must calm the worried ones so as to ensure the certainty and effectiveness of the assistance Belgium wishes to extend to you, in return for which she only asks for a general promise of security, but that this security shall be sincere and solidly established.

Providence will help us all, and especially you who are about to labour successfully at the overwhelming task of setting up the new political and administrative structure of the Congo.

I swear to you that Belgium and the Congo will endure, and they will endure not only in mutual independence and efficient co-operation, but also in lasting, sincere friendship.

Long live the Congo.

Long live Belgium.

ROYAL PALACE OF BRUSSELS

Speech delivered by His Majesty King Baudouin
on Sunday, February 22, 1963, during the
reception given for the United Nations

ROYAL PALACE OF BRUSSELS

**Speech delivered by His Majesty King Baudouin
on Sunday, February 21, 1960, during the
reception given for the Round Table Delegates**



Gentlemen,

The work of the Round Table, the results of which will serve as a basis for the political and organisation of the Congo, has just ended in a spirit of mutual comprehension and co-operation. It gives me much pleasure today to receive the Congolese delegations in the presence of members of the Belgian Government and Parliament. More than ever, our thoughts return to King Leopold II, who founded the Congo State some twenty years ago.

From a completely unexplored wilderness, known to most of the world, from a variety of tribes mainly hostile to each other and victims of the slave trade and disease, a mighty empire has grown.

An exceptional and admirable factor is that my great-uncle did not achieve this union through conquest, but essentially by peaceful means, through a series of treaties signed by the King and the tribal chieftains. Thanks to these treaties, the Belgians were able to establish peace and all the other prerequisites of prosperity in the heart of Central Africa.

Those who are to succeed us at the helm of the Congolese State will learn how great, how bold — I say it unhesitatingly — how generous

was the task accomplished by Belgium in the Congo.

When we arrived on the scene, everything had yet to be done. We are giving you back your Congo with a full-scale administrative system, great cities, railroads, highways, airports, hospitals, schools, an intellectual class, a currency, a number of industries, an agricultural industry in full development, a standard of living and an economy of which many young nations might well be envious.

Today, our deeply moved and grateful thoughts are with the Belgians living in the Congo who, far from their mother-country and frequently in conditions that leave much to be desired, have devoted their lives to you with untiring abnegation.

The statements you have made at the Round Table convince us that you are fully appreciative of all Belgium has done for you, and all she will do in the future if — as I am sure they will — our two peoples remain united by the bonds of sincere friendship.

In your presence, Gentlemen, it is my desire to take formal cognizance of these declarations.

They prove that it is your firm intent to ensure the security of persons and property within the

borders of the future Independent Congo State. They prove, too, that you are fully aware of the enormous difficulties of all kinds with which the Government of your country will have to contend, and that it may confidently look to Belgium for assistance in overcoming them.

Gentlemen, we count on your loyalty as you may count on ours.

Hitherto, Belgium alone assumed the overwhelming responsibility of governing the peoples and territories which she has, I am proud to say, moulded into the Congo State.

We have been obliged to fight valiantly to defend your borders ; you too will be called upon to defend this great inheritance against foreign intrigue and envy which, under cover of pretended assistance, will do its best to take advantage of your inexperience.

Tomorrow, these responsibilities will be yours. Never forget that our hand remains outstretched to help you pursue the task which we may be proud of having successfully achieved, since in the final analysis, it has led to your independence.

May God protect the Congo.



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Members of the Government

Their Excellencies :

Albert LILAR, Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Round Table; Auguste DE SCHRIJVER, Minister of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi; Raymond SCHEYVEN, Minister in Charge of Economic and Financial Affairs of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi; René LEFEBVRE, Minister of the Interior; Pierre HARMEL, Minister of Cultural Affairs; Laurent MERCHERS, Minister of Justice.

Advisors to the Ministers

Advisors to the Deputy Prime Minister :

Messrs. A. GOLDSCHMIDT, Principal Private Secretary; J. BRASSINNE, Attaché, Secretary of the Conference.

Advisors to the Minister of the Congo :

Messrs. A. SCHÖLLER, Vice-Governor General; A. STENMANS, Government Secretary; M. WILLAERT, Principal Private Secretary; A. VANDER STICHELE, Head of Mission; F. VERVIER, Attaché; G. WATHAR, Attaché; M. ZWAENEPOEL, Press Attaché; J. KASONGO, Attaché; J.-J. PALMERS, Private Secretary; L. DE GROOTE, Head of Mission; E. VAN WYLIICK, Legal Advisor; J. WESTHOF, Legal Advisor; P. PIRON, Principal Private Secretary to the Governor General.

Advisor to the Minister in Charge of Economic and Financial Affairs of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi :

Mr. J. DURIEUX, Principal Private Secretary.

Advisors to the Prime Minister :

Messrs. J. DE MEYER, Counsellor; Comte H. d'ASPREMONT-LYNDEN, Assistant Principal Private Secretary; M. VAN DE PUTTE, Counsellor.

Advisors to the Minister of Foreign Affairs :

Messrs. P. DESCHAMPS, Assistant Principal Private Secretary; E. DAVIGNON, Attaché in training with the External Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Advisor to the Minister of National Defence :

Colonel Lucien CHAMPION, Belgian Staff Officer..

Members of the Belgian Delegation

SENATE

Social-Christian Party

Effective members :

Messrs. Jean DUVIEUSART; Henri DELPORT.

Deputy members :

Messrs. Paul ESTIENNE; Hubert LEYNEN.

Belgian Socialist Party

Effective members :

Messrs. Henri ROLIN; Dore SMETS.

Deputy members :

Messrs. Simon FLAMME; Roger DEKEYZER.

Liberal Party

Effective member :

Mr. Auguste BUISSET.

Deputy member :

Mr. Norbert HOUGARDY.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Social-Christian Party

Effective members :

Messrs. André DEQUAE; Charles du BUS de WARNAFFE.

Deputy members :

Messrs. Ludovic MOYERSON; Maurice BRASSEUR; Théo LEFEBVRE; Hilaire WILLOT; Jos DE SAEGER.

Belgian Socialist Party

Effective members :

Messrs. Georges HOUSIAUX; Antoine SPINOY.

Deputy members :

Messrs. Léo COLLARD; Victor LAROCK; Henri FAYAT; Jos VAN EYNDE.

Liberal Party

Effective member :

Mr. Hilaire LAHAYE.

Deputy members :

Messrs. Maurice DESTENAY; René DREZE; Ferdinand BOEY.

Members of the Congolese Delegation

CARTEL

(11 effective + 11 deputies)

Abako

3 effective members :

Messrs. Edmond NZEZA-NLANDU; Joseph KASA-VUBU; Daniel KANZA.

4 deputy members :

Messrs. Philibert LUYEYE; Simon NZEZA; Emmanuel KINI; Joseph YUMBU.

National Congolese Movement - Kalonji Tendency (M.N.C.)

2 effective members :

Messrs. Albert KALONJI; Joseph ILEO (until 15-2-60); Paul NGANDU (from 16-2-1960).

3 deputy members :

Messrs. Joseph NGALULA; MUAMBA; Pierre MISSA-KABU.

African Solidarity Party (P.S.A.)

3 effective members :

Messrs. Cléophas KAMITATU; Sylvain KAMA; Justin MATITI.

2 deputy members :

Messrs. Valentin LUBUMA; Christian MAFUTA.

People's Party

1 effective member :

Mr. Alphone NGUVULU.

1 deputy member :

Mr. Antoine MANDUNGU.

Congo General Federation (F.G.C.)

1 effective member :

Mr. Henri KASONGO.

Bayazi Alliance (ABAZI)

1 effective member :

Mr. Gaston MIDU.

1 deputy member :

Mr. Wenceslas MBUENY.

National Progress Party (P.N.P.)

11 effective members :

Messrs. Jérôme ANANY; Jean-Marie KITITWA; Alphonse ILUNGA; Albert DELVAUX; Antoine LOPES; André

ANEKONZAPA; Paul BOLYA; André-Marie EDINDALI; Fernand ESSANDJA; Léopold LIKINDA; Sylvestre MUDIN-GAYI.

11 deputy members :

Messrs. Dominique MUBANGA; Joseph KULUMBA; Lius WITSHIMA; Michel ATOKA; Pierre MOMBELE; Ignace KANGA; Revocato KAPEPA; Gilbert PONGO; Romain TELU; Victor KANDE; EKWE.

African Regroupment Centre (CEREA)

1 effective member :

Mr. Anicet KASHAMURA (replaced by : Mr. Jean WEREGEMERE).

1 deputy member :

Mr. Marcel BISUKIRO.

National Congolese Movement - Lumumba Tendency (M.N.C.)

3 effective members :

Messrs. Patrice LUMUMBA; Joseph KASONGO; Jean-Marie YUMBA.

3 deputy members :

Messrs. Sebastien IKOLO; FINANT; Bruno BUKASA.

Confederation of Katanga Associations (CONAKAT)

2 effective members :

Messrs. Moïse TSHOMBE; Jean-Baptiste KIBWE.

2 deputy members :

Messrs. Charles MUTAKA; François KASONGO (transferred to the Records office and replaced by Mr. Prosper MUYUMBA).

Association of Upper Congo Peoples (ASSORECO)

1 effective member :

Mr. Jean BOLIKANGO.

1 deputy member :

Mr. Armand BOBANGA.

Progressist Rural Alliance

2 effective members :

Messrs. Gervais BAHIZI; SANGARA.

2 deputy members :

Messrs Téodomie NZAMU KWEREKA; Albert KALINDA.

Katanga Baluba Association (BALUBAKAT)

1 effective member :

Mr. Jason SENDWE.

1 deputy member :

Mr. Rémy MWAMBA.

Congolese Union

- 1 effective member :
Mr. Gabriel KITENGE.
- 1 deputy member :
Mr. Joseph SHANGO

Tribal Chieftains from Leopoldville Province

- 1 effective member :
Mr. Michel MPUTELA.
- 1 deputy member :
Mr. Henri ILEND.

Tribal Chieftains from the Equator Province

- 3 effective members :
Messrs Jean-Médard ILUMBE; Eugène N'DJOKU; Innocent ABAMBA.
- 3 deputy members :
Messrs ENGULU; MWANGA; MOSAMBA.

Tribal Chieftains from the Eastern Province

- 2 effective members :
Messrs. François KUPA; Sabiti MABE.
- 3 deputy members :
Messrs Busimbo YAELE; Joachim BATEKO; Joseph LIONGA.

Tribal Chieftains from the Kivu Province

- 2 effective members :
Messrs. Henry SIMBA; Omari PENEMIZENGA.
- 1 deputy member :
Mr. Joseph TSHOMBA.

Tribal Chieftains from the Katanga Province

- 2 effective members :
Messrs. Paul BAKO DITENDE; Antoine MWENDA-MUNONGO.
- 3 deputy members :
Messrs. Léon ILUNGA; KASEMBE; KABEMBE.

Tribal Chieftains from the Kasai Province

- 2 effective members :
Messrs Jonas MANGOLO; Emeri PENESENGA
- 4 deputy members :
Messrs. Michel OHANGA; Louis TSHIBAMBE; WAF-WANA; KATOMBA (13-2-1960).

Congolese Attaché at the Conference

Mr. Edouard BAYONA.

Advisors to the Congolese Delegation

CARTEL :

Abako : Mr. J. VAN BILSEN.
M.N.C. (Kalonji) : Mr. J. GERARD-LIBOIS.
People's Party : Mr. PERIN.
P.S.A. : Mme SPITAEELS-EVRARD.
F.G.C. : Mr. LACOURT.

BALUBAKAT : Mr. A. DOUCY.

MONGO UNION : Mme P. BOUVIER.

P.N.P. : Messrs. H. SIMONET, LEBRUN, CAMBIER.

TRIBAL CHIEFTAINS : Messrs. J. MAISIN; G. MINEUR.

CONAKAT : Mr. HUMBLE.

CEREA : Mr. J. TERFVE.

CONGOLESE UNION : Mr. A. RUBENS.

A.R.P. : Mr. COULET.

ASSORECO : Mr. V. PROMONTORIO.

M.N.C. LUMUMBA : Mr. E. LOLIKI.